

(c) then performing a lateral growth step on said gate dielectric [which increases] to increase the thickness of said gate dielectric [in proximity to sidewalls] at the corners of said gate, but not under central regions of said gate;

(d) depositing a metallic material onto sidewalls of said gate;

(e) reacting said metallic material with said gate to form a conductive compound; and

(f) stripping unreacted portions of said metallic material; whereby a gate structure with enhanced conductivity is formed.

Amend claim 9 as follows:

9. (Twice Amended) A product produced by the method [of Claim 6] for forming a transistor gate structure, comprising the steps of:

(a) forming a gate dielectric over a semiconductor region;

(b) forming a patterned gate over said gate dielectric;

(c) then performing [performing] a lateral growth step on said gate dielectric [which increases] to increase the thickness of said gate dielectric [in proximity to sidewalls] at the corners of said gate, but not under central regions of said gate; and

(d) after said step (c), forming conductive sidewall spacers on said gate.[.]

#### **REMARKS**

The finality of the rejection is improper because the amendment to the claims did not raise new issues and/or require a new search. In fact, claims 8 and 9 as set forth in the prior response were identical to those claims prior to response. Claims 8 and 9 originally claimed the